



U.S. divided over Roe's repeal as abortion foes gird for march



Anti-abortion activists march outside of the U.S. Supreme Court during the March for Life in Washington, Jan. 21, 2022.

By DAVID CRARY
AP National Writer

Anti-abortion activists will have multiple reasons to celebrate — and some reasons for unease — when they gather Friday in Washington for the annual March for Life. The march, which includes a rally drawing abortion opponents from across the nation, has been held annually since January 1974 — a year after the U.S. Supreme Court's Roe v. Wade decision established a nationwide right to abortion.

This year's gathering — 50 years after that decision — will be the first since the high court struck down Roe in a momentous ruling last June.

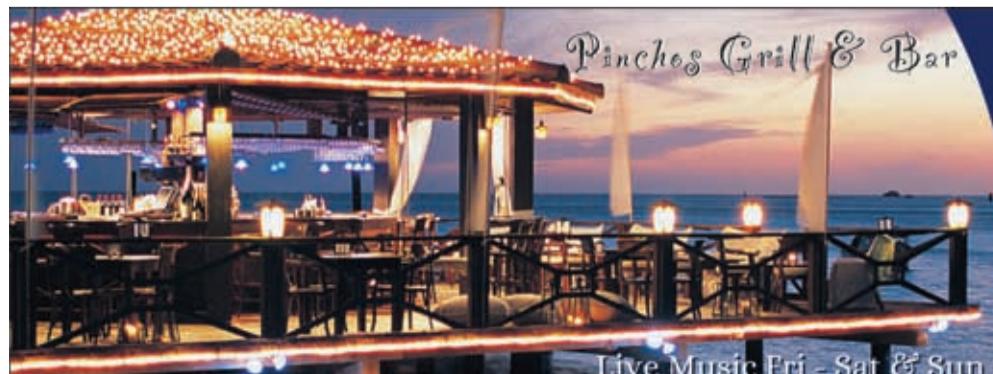
Since then, 12 Republican-governed states have implemented sweeping bans on abortion, and several others seek to do the same. But those moves have been offset by other developments. Abortion opponents were defeated in votes on

ballot measures in Kansas, Michigan and Kentucky. State courts have blocked several bans from taking effect. And myriad efforts are underway to help women in abortion-ban states either get abortions out of state or use the abortion pill for self-managed abortions.

"It's almost like the old wild, wild West ... everything is still shaking out," said Carol Tobias, president of the National Right to Life Committee. With numerous Democratic-governed states taking steps to protect and expand abortion access, Tobias likened the current situation to the pre-Civil War era when the nation was closely divided between free states and slave states.

"I will not be surprised if we have something like that for a few years," she said. "But I do know that pro-lifers are not going to give up — it's a civil rights issue for us."

Continued on Page 2



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Mr. Dangui Oduber enjoyed a lovely conversation with a couple from U.S.A



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U.S. divided over Roe's repeal as abortion foes gird for march



Anti-abortion activists march towards the U.S. Supreme Court during the March for Life in Washington, Jan. 21, 2022.

Associated Press

Continued from Front

The theme for this year's March for Life is "Next Steps: Marching Forward into a Post-Roe America." Scheduled speakers include Hall of Fame football coach Tony Dungy and Mississippi Attorney General Lynn Fitch, who won the Supreme Court case that overturned Roe.

The president of March for Life, Jeanne Mancini, depicted the June ruling as "a massive victory for the pro-life movement."

"But the battle to build a culture of life is far from over," she said. "March for Life will continue to advocate for the unborn and policies that protect them until abortion becomes unthinkable."

Prospects for any federal legislation restricting abortion nationwide are negligible for now, given that any such measures emerging from the Republican-led House would face rejection in the Democratic-led Senate. The main battlegrounds will be in the states. Since June, near-total bans on abortion have been

implemented in Alabama, Arkansas, Idaho, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas and West Virginia. Legal challenges are pending against several of those bans.

Elective abortions also are unavailable in Wisconsin, due to legal uncertainties faced by abortion clinics, and in North Dakota, where the lone clinic relocated to Minnesota.

Bans passed by lawmakers in Ohio, Indiana and Wyoming have been blocked by state courts while legal challenges are pending. And in South Carolina, the state Supreme Court on Jan. 5 struck down a ban on abortion after six weeks, ruling the restriction violates a state constitutional right to privacy.

The Guttmacher Institute, a research group which supports abortion rights, says the overall result is "a chaotic legal landscape that is disruptive for providers trying to offer care and patients trying to obtain it."

"When people do not have access to abortion care in their state, they are forced

to make the difficult decision to travel long distances for care, self-manage an abortion or carry an unwanted pregnancy to term," Guttmacher staffers Elizabeth Nash and Isabel Guarnieri wrote last week. Looking ahead, some anti-abortion leaders hope the Republicans nominate a 2024 presidential candidate who will aggressively push for nationwide abortion restrictions, rather than keep it as a state-by-state matter. "The approach to winning on abortion in federal races, proven for a decade, is this: state clearly the ambitious consensus pro-life position and contrast that with the extreme view of Democrat opponents," said Marjorie Dannenfelser, president of SBA Pro-Life America.

Dannenfelser says she's not surprised by the divisive ups-and-downs that have unfolded since the June ruling.

"This is what it looks like when democracy is restored and we have a voice in the debate," she said. "For 50 years, we had no voice because the judi-

cacy was always going to shield public opinion from having an effect on the law."

"We always knew it wouldn't be a straight line (after Roe's repeal)," she said, adding "we know neither side is going to lay down and die."

Multiple public opinion polls since June have found that a majority of Americans support access to legal abortion. According to an Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research poll conducted in July, 53% of U.S. adults said they disapproved of the Supreme Court's repeal of Roe, while 30% approved.

Professor Kathleen Sprows Cummings, director of the University of Notre Dame's Cushwa Center for the Study of American Catholicism, suggested the anti-abortion movement may suffer from a perception among many Americans that it's more concerned with controlling women's bodies than helping them cope with unintended pregnancies.

"Pro-lifers also now relish the chance to actually debate the issues in a democratic, open context ... as opposed to constantly running into the flats of various courts," he said. "We may lose some battles early on... but it is worth it to have the debates." □

than about babies," she said. Some abortion opponents are trying to counter such perceptions. In Texas, for example, anti-abortion groups are urging lawmakers to spend more money on services for pregnant and parenting Texans, including expanding Medicaid coverage for mothers. According to Texas Right to Life, the state's new abortion ban has had a major impact — it says only 68 abortions were recorded by state health officials in July 2022, compared to 4,879 in July 2021.

The group noted the data does not include illegal, unreported abortions — which are widely believed to be increasing as women obtain abortion pills by mail from overseas or from Mexico suppliers.

Charles Camosy, a medical humanities professor at Creighton University School of Medicine who opposes abortion, has analyzed the high-profile election defeats suffered by the anti-abortion movement. Voters in Kansas and Kentucky rejected constitutional amendments that would have declared there is no right to abortion; Michigan voters approved an amendment enshrining the right to abortion in the state constitution.

"Pro-lifers have clearly and badly lost the PR battle since June and this has shaped how people are voting," Camosy said via email. He said abortion-rights supporters were better organized and better funded, while many anti-abortion politicians either avoided the issue or sounded too extreme.

"There are obviously very good things that have happened, however," added Camosy, citing the drop in abortions reported in states with bans.

"Pro-lifers also now relish the chance to actually debate the issues in a democratic, open context ... as opposed to constantly running into the flats of various courts," he said. "We may lose some battles early on... but it is worth it to have the debates." □

Feds to investigate nursing home abuse of antipsychotics

By AMANDA SEITZ

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The federal government says it will begin a targeted crackdown on nursing homes' abuse of antipsychotic drugs and misdiagnoses of schizophrenia in patients.

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services is launching investigations this month into select nursing homes, aimed at verifying whether patients have been properly diagnosed with the psychiatric disorder.

Evidence has mounted over decades that some facilities wrongly diagnose residents with schizophrenia or administer antipsychotic drugs to sedate them, despite dangerous side effects that could include death, according to the agency.

"No nursing home resident should be improperly diagnosed with schizophrenia or given an inappropriate antipsychotic," Health and Human Services Secre-



Chiquita Brooks-LaSure, the Administrator for the Centers of Medicare and Medicaid Services, poses for a photograph in her office, Feb. 9, 2022, in Washington.

Associated Press

tary Xavier Becerra said in a statement Wednesday.

"The steps we are taking today will help prevent these errors and give families peace of mind."

Some facilities may be

dodging increased scrutiny around gratuitous use of antipsychotic medications by coding residents as having schizophrenia, even when they do not show signs of the extremely rare

disorder, a government report last year found. Less than 1% of the population is believed to have schizophrenia, which is marked by delusions, hallucinations and disordered thinking.

In 2012, the federal government began tracking when nursing homes use antipsychotics on residents doing so can impact the facility's quality rating in a public database but only for those who have not been diagnosed with schizophrenia.

Antipsychotics for those nursing home residents has dropped to under 20% in recent years, according to federal data.

A November report from the HHS Office of the Inspector General, however, revealed that the number of residents reported as having schizophrenia without a corresponding diagnosis skyrocketed between 2015 and 2019, with 99 nursing homes in the country reporting that 20% or more of their residents have the disorder.

"The number of unsupported schizophrenia diagnoses increased and in 2019 was concentrated in relatively few nursing homes," the report concluded. □

Justice Dept. charges Russian founder of cryptocurrency firm

By ERIC TUCKER and JOSH BOAK

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A Russian national who founded a cryptocurrency exchange that the Justice Department says became a haven for the proceeds of criminal activity has been arrested, federal officials said Wednesday.

Anatoly Legkodymov, who lives in China, was arrested Tuesday night in Miami and was due in court on a charge of conducting an unlicensed money-transmitting business.

Prosecutors allege that Legkodymov's cryptocurrency exchange, Bitzlato Ltd., of which he served as majority owner, did not implement required anti-money-laundering safeguards and required only minimal identification from its users, even permitting them to supply information belonging to "straw man registrants," people serving

as cover for the users.

"The result was that Bitzlato became a safe haven for criminals, like drug dealers and ransomware groups," said Breon Peace, the U.S. attorney in Brooklyn, where the case was filed. "They knew that when the police traced their funds to Bitzlato, Bitzlato would not be able to turn over its users' true identities."

The company, registered in Hong Kong, was founded in 2016 and operates globally.

The Justice Department said Bitzlato, either directly or through its intermediaries, conducted more than \$700 million in cryptocurrency exchanges with users of Hydra Market, a dark-net marketplace for drugs, fake identifications and other illegal products. The Justice Department seized that marketplace last year and shut it down.

"Operating offshore or moving your servers out of

the continental U.S. will not shield you," Deputy Attorney General Lisa Monaco said at a Wednesday news conference. "And whether you break our laws from China or Europe, or abuse our financial system from a tropical island, you can expect to answer for your crimes inside a United States courtroom."

Monaco's mention of a tropical island seemed to be an apparent reference to the arrest last month in the Bahamas of Sam Bankman-Fried, the former CEO of failed cryptocurrency firm FTX.

The charge Legkodymov faces carries a maximum penalty of five years in prison upon conviction. Legkodymov, 40, was in custody Wednesday, and it was unclear if he had a lawyer who could comment on his behalf. He could face additional charges as the investigation moves forward. Asked at the news confer-

ence if Bitzlato had assisted Russia in evading sanctions tied to its invasion of Ukraine, Deputy Treasury Secretary Wally Adeyemo said, "What we do know is Russia has set up an ecosystem that is permissive for cyber criminals."

The Treasury Department's

Financial Crimes Enforcement Network and French authorities worked together to identify the alleged criminal activities by Bitzlato, which U.S. officials said was a sign of the global cooperation to purge bad actors from cryptocurrency markets. □



Deputy Attorney General Lisa Monaco announces international enforcement action against cryptocurrency exchange Bitzlato and the arrest of the company's founder, Russian national Anatoly Legkodymov, during a news conference at the Justice Department, Wednesday, Jan. 18, 2023, in Washington.

Associated Press

Art professor sues after firing over Prophet Muhammad images

By MARGARET STAFFORD

Associated Press

ST. PAUL, Minn. (AP) — Attorneys for an adjunct art professor said Tuesday she is suing the Minnesota university that dismissed her after a Muslim student objected to depictions of the Prophet Muhammad in a global art course, while the university admitted to a "misstep" and plans to hold public conversations about academic freedom.

In her lawsuit, Erika López Prater alleges that Hamline University, a small, private school in St. Paul, subjected her to religious discrimination and defamation, and damaged her professional and personal reputation.

"Among other things, Hamline, through its administration, has referred to Dr. López Prater's actions as 'undeniably Islamophobic,'" her attorneys said in a statement. "Comments like these, which have now been published in news stories around the globe, will follow Dr. López Prater throughout her career, potentially resulting in her inability to obtain a tenure track position at any institution of higher education." In Minnesota, a lawsuit can be started by serving a summons and a complaint



Aram Wedatalla, a Hamline University senior and the president of Muslim Student Association (MSA), speaks during a news conference at CAIR-MN office, Wednesday, Jan. 11, 2023, in Minneapolis.

to the party being sued. Attorneys for López Prater said the lawsuit was served to Hamline University on Tuesday and will soon be filed in court.

Hamline University President Fayneese Miller and Ellen Watters, the Board of Trustees chair, released a joint statement Tuesday saying recent "communications, articles and opinion pieces" have led the school to "review and re-examine our actions."

"Like all organizations,

sometimes we misstep," the statement said. "In the interest of hearing from and supporting our Muslim students, language was used that does not reflect our sentiments on academic freedom. Based on all that we have learned, we have determined that our usage of the term 'Islamophobic' was therefore flawed." The statement did not address the lawsuit, but said the university strongly supports academic freedom, which should co-exist with

support for students. The university plans to hold two public conversations in coming months, one on academic freedom and student care and another on academic freedom and religion.

Last October López Prater showed the 14th-century painting depicting the Prophet Muhammad in a lesson on Islamic art. For many Muslims, visual depictions of the Prophet Muhammad violate their faith, which López Prater knew.

Associated Press

According to the lawsuit, López Prater's course syllabus included a note that students would view images of religious figures, including the Prophet Muhammad. The syllabus also included an offer to work with students uncomfortable with viewing those images.

She also warned the class immediately before showing the depiction of the Prophet Muhammad. She said in media interviews last week that her goal was to teach students about the "rich diversity" of attitudes toward such imagery.

López Prater has said she and the department chair were discussing her teaching a new course, but after the student's complaint she was told "her services were no longer needed."

Hamline's president previously said the professor's contract was not renewed following the fall semester. The lawsuit alleges that instead of Hamline recognizing López Prater showed the images with a proper academic purpose, the university chose to impose the student's religious view that no one should ever view images of the prophet on all other students and employees. □

Michigan wolf population holding steady, 2022 survey shows

Associated Press

(AP) - Michigan's gray wolf population remains stable and might have reached its natural ceiling after mounting a decadeslong comeback in the Upper Peninsula, state biologists said after the latest survey. An analysis of data collected in 2022 produced an estimate of 631 wolves, give or take 49, the Department of Natural Resources said Tuesday.

The survey estimated 136 packs roam the peninsula in Michigan's far north, with an average of four to five animals in each.

"These results show a continued trend of statistical stability, indicating that gray wolves may have

reached their biological carrying capacity within the Upper Peninsula," said Cody Norton, the DNR's wolf specialist.

Carrying capacity is the maximum population an environment can support, based on factors such as food, territory, water and other animals with which to breed.

Wolves once roamed across Michigan but were driven out, as in much of the lower 48 states, through trapping, poisoning and bounty programs.

After they were protected under the Endangered Species Act in the 1970s, a remnant population in Minnesota began migrating through northern Wisconsin

and eventually reached Michigan's Upper Peninsula. Numbers rose steadily from 1989 to 2011 and have leveled off.

The DNR conducts its survey every two years. Last year's estimated minimum number was down slightly from 695 in 2020, but officials said the totals have not differed statistically since 2011.

But wolf density appears to have shifted, decreasing in some areas of the western U.P. and rising in parts of the peninsula's eastern region, DNR wildlife biologist Brian Roell said.

That could be linked to heavy snowfall and bitter cold between 2013 and 2015 that reduced deer densities in some places,

he said. No wolves are known to live in the Lower Peninsula. Michigan's DNR last year released a draft updated

wolf management plan. But gray wolves still have federal legal protection and cannot be killed unless in defense of human life. □



This April 18, 2008, file photo provided by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife shows a gray wolf.

Associated Press

Israeli high court: Netanyahu must fire key Cabinet ally

By TIA GOLDENBERG and LAURIE KELLMAN

Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — Israel's Supreme Court ruled Wednesday that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu must fire a key ally from the country's new Cabinet, presenting the Israeli leader with a potential coalition crisis and deepening a rift over the power of the courts.

Ten of 11 judges on the high court found that Aryeh Deri, the influential head of the ultra-Orthodox Shas party who has served repeatedly in Netanyahu's previous governments, is disqualified from serving as a minister after he was convicted last year for tax offenses and placed on probation as part of a plea deal. Deri has pledged not to quit and met after the ruling with Netanyahu.

"Most of the judges on the panel decided that this appointment suffers from extreme unreasonability, and therefore the prime minister must remove Deri from his position," the court said in a statement.

The much-anticipated ruling comes as Israel is being roiled by a dispute over sweeping changes to the country's legal system. One such proposal under consideration is the elimination of the court's "reasonability" test when reviewing government decisions. Critics say the various changes at issue would place too much power in the hands of the government and weaken the Supreme Court. Proponents say they would correct a power imbalance between the executive and judicial branches.

Netanyahu will now have to decide whether he abides by the court ruling and fires his key ally, Deri or takes the dispute with the judicial system up a notch and defies it. A spokesman for Netanyahu had no immediate comment.

But the leaders of the parties in the ruling coalition



Member of Knesset Aryeh Deri attends a special session of the Knesset, Israel's parliament, in Jerusalem on Dec. 29, 2022.

decried the ruling as a slap at voters after the Nov. 1 election. In a statement, they vowed to act "in any legal way that is available to us and without delay to correct the injustice and the severe damage caused to the democratic choice and the sovereignty of the people."

Dr. Amir Fuchs, senior researcher at the Israel Democracy Institute, a Jerusalem think tank, said Netanyahu is unlikely to ignore the ruling because then he'd be in contempt of court and there is no appealing a Supreme Court decision.

"I am sure that he will abide by the ruling. It doesn't mean that he will respect the ruling," Fuchs said. "What will probably happen is that they will do very quick legislation that will enable him to appoint Deri again."

It's not clear whether the proposed legal changes, including a plan to allow lawmakers to overrule Supreme Court decisions, could retroactively be applied to Deri's case.

Critics said such a move would bend the rules to accommodate a convict and could encourage corrup-

tion among politicians. The ruling carries potentially troublesome consequences for Netanyahu's coalition. Some Shas members have urged Netanyahu to find a solution that would grant Deri the title they say he deserves as head of a mid-sized party. Otherwise, the party could bolt the coalition, which would shrink Netanyahu's 64-seat majority by 11 seats in the 120-member Knesset.

Yakov Margi, a Shas Cabinet minister, told Kan public radio that, "if Aryeh Deri isn't in the government, there isn't a government." In a move that was seen as crucial to bringing the governing coalition together, Israeli legislators last month changed a law that prohibited a convict on probation from being a Cabinet minister.

That cleared the way for Deri to join the government but prompted the Supreme Court challenge.

Deri is currently serving half a term as the minister of health and interior affairs. He was set to become finance minister in the second half of the term and he is also deputy prime minister.

Likud and its ultra-Orthodox

and far-right partners captured a majority of seats in the Knesset, or parliament, in Nov. 1 elections, and formed a government that has made changing the legal system a centerpiece of its agenda.

Public opinion polls have shown most Israelis oppose Deri serving as a government minister.

Still, the Deri ruling is only expected to deepen the divide over the legal overhaul. It will be seen by both camps as an affirmation of their views: either that the courts, in determining who can be a Cabinet minister, have too much power, or that judicial oversight can hold back legislators from questionable laws.

"Today it's clear that the court, which is not elected, is not interested in compromises and wants limitless control over elected officials," National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir said in a statement. "Reform now!"

Opposition leader Yair Lapid said that if Deri is not fired, "Israel will enter an unprecedented constitutional crisis and it will no longer be a democracy and will not be a law-abiding state." □

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Mufti's talk of women's duties angers some Turkish Cypriots

By MENELAOS HADJICOSTIS

Associated Press

NICOSIA, Cyprus (AP) — A Muslim religious leader's instruction to women to dutifully accept a husband's "invitation to bed" to procreate has sparked outrage among many Turkish Cypriots, who saw the remarks as an imported encroachment of fundamentalist Islam on their secular community.

"We don't live in a theocratic regime. This is neither Afghanistan nor Iran, sir!" said Dogus Derya, a prominent female lawmaker with the left-wing CTP party in ethnically divided Cyprus' breakaway Turkish Cypriot north.

Derya has led a chorus of condemnation against Ahmet Unsal, the Turkish-appointed head of the Turkish Cypriot Department of Religious Affairs. Unsal reportedly told women during a lecture earlier this month on marriage obligations under Islam that it was essential for women to marry without delay and have children because matrimony "isn't about having fun."

Unsal also said women must stay away from men except their husbands to "protect their virtue" and



A woman wearing her headscarf walks with her child past a Turkish flag on a print board, in a street in the old city of the Turkish occupied part of the divided capital Nicosia, Cyprus, Wednesday, Jan. 18, 2023.

to safeguard their men's property. In turn, men are obliged to pay for their wives' food, shelter and clothing, he said, noting that Allah abhors divorce. Derya blasted Unsal as presenting "his fantasies about subjugating women as the word of Allah" and insisted that there's no place for religious diktats in a state that functions under the rule of secular law.

"He has exceeded his authority and area of responsibility," Derya said of Unsal. "He considers women as incubators and men as money machines. He sees women not as human beings but as 'goods' subjugated to men," the lawmaker continued. "We want him to know that Cypriot women don't ask their men how many children they'll have, what job

they'll do, whether they're going to divorce or not," she said. "We won't allow you to impose your fundamentalist way of life on us women or on our country." Unsal defended his remarks, saying his expressed views were in accordance with the teachings of Islam. Several hundred protesters from 46 trade unions and other organizations braved the rain on Monday and

Associated Press

took to the streets of the northern part of the divided capital Nicosia to voice their anger at Unsal.

The protesters chanted "Onsal go home, what do you care about Cyprus." A joint statement read at the event said there would be no stop to efforts to block "all those who are trying to change our way of life." Turkey has for decades tried to fit Turkish Cypriot society into its own mold, which has become more religious under Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. Although the Religious Affairs head is technically appointed by Turkish Cypriot authorities, Ankara has final say.

Cyprus was split in 1974 when Turkey invaded following a coup aimed at union with Greece. Only Turkey recognizes a Turkish Cypriot declaration of independence and keeps more than 30,000 troops in the north.

Nazim Cavusoglu, the Turkish Cypriot education minister, said many Turkish Cypriots who are faithful Muslims seek religious instruction as part of their children's education but parents can opt students out of such instruction. □

Church of England refuses to back same-sex marriage

By SYLVIA HUI

Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — The Church of England said Wednesday it will allow blessings for same-sex, civil marriages for the first time but same-sex couples still will not be allowed to marry in its churches.

The decision followed five years of debate and consultation on the church's position on sexuality. It is expected to be outlined in a report to the church's national assembly, the General Synod, which meets in London next month.

Under the proposals, the Church of England's stance that the sacrament of matrimony is restricted to

unions between one man and one woman will not change.

However, same-sex couples would be able to have a church service with prayers of dedication, thanksgiving or for God's blessing after they have a civil wedding or register a civil partnership.

Same-sex marriage has been legal in England and Wales since 2013, but the church did not change its teaching when the law changed.

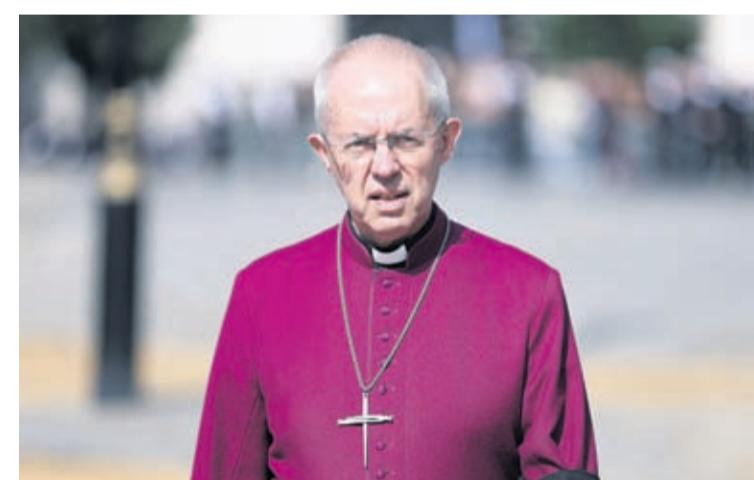
Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby, the spiritual leader of the Anglican Church, acknowledged that the proposals "will appear to go too far for some

and not nearly far enough for others."

"This response reflects the diversity of views in the Church of England on questions of sexuality, relationships and marriage. I rejoice in that diversity and I welcome this way of reflecting it in the life of our church," Welby said.

"I hope it can offer a way for the Church of England, publicly and unequivocally, to say to all Christians and especially LGBTQI+ people, that you are welcome and a valued and precious part of the body of Christ," he added.

The church said bishops plan to issue a formal apology to LGBTQ people on



The Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby walks in Westminster on Sept. 14, 2022.

Associated Press

Friday for the "rejection, exclusion and hostility" they have felt from within the church.

It said it would issue pastoral guidance to its ministers and congregations and urge them to welcome same-sex couples "unreservedly and joyfully." □

Archbishop of York Stephen Cottrell apologized for "the way LGBTQI+ people and those they love have been treated by the church which, most of all, ought to recognize everyone as precious and created in the image of God." □

Choreographer Raisa Montilla is preparing an exciting show for Carnival Queen Election

ORANJESTAD – Preparing a candidate for competition in a Carnival Queen election requires a big team working long days to ensure everything is ready for when the day comes. Choreographer Raisa Montilla explains a bit about the preparation process for a carnival queen show and everything that goes into it.

Montilla explains that the preparation for a show takes a long time, not only to train the dancers that will perform on stage, but also to come up with the choreography before she begins teaching them the dance. "Ideally the preparation for a show will start at least a month before the election takes place. This is specifi-

cally regarding the show, the aspect of choreography. Considering the queen herself and other elements, the preparation needs to start even earlier," she says.

Montilla explains that this year she is in charge of the choreography for a candidate that will be competing in the election. This is not the first time that Montilla is involved in a show for a carnival queen, but it is the first time she is in charge of the choreography for the show on her own. "In the past I have helped with different carnival dances and queen shows, but this is the first time I am creating the choreography on my own and I am

in charge of the entire process of the show," she commented.

Regarding the queen election this weekend, Montilla indicated that she is very excited to see her kids dancing on stage and she is hoping for a positive role. "I know that the kids will give a great performance and the queen as well. The hope is always there that the results will be positive for us" – meaning that their queen will be crowned winner – "it would be a great achievement. But with or without these results, what's important is putting on a great show and for the children to enjoy their night on stage," she commented.



Montilla has a long trajectory in the world of dance. She has been dancing since she was six years old, and until she was 26, she was part of different dance groups, and later transitioned from dancer to

choreographer. "I believe dance will always be an important part of my life. Even though after having children the balance shifted a bit, I am still active and it is an important part of who I am," she emphasized. □

In total he dedicated 36 years to Aruba's tourism A.T.A. thanks Ed Malone for nine years as Director for North America

ORANJESTAD – Recently an event took place to thank Ed Malone for his work as Director for North America for Aruba Tourism Authority for the past nine years. During the event, minister of Tourism, Mr. Dangui Oduber, CEO of A.T.A., CMO of A.T.A. and Ed himself shared some words about his trajectory in Aruba for Aruba, as well as his passion for Aruba.

In Ed's own words: "I came to Aruba to find a job and I found a home."

His arrival was in 1987, when he was transferred temporarily to Aruba as a GM at Americana Aruba Beach Resort. From that moment



The fact that a transfer to do a temporary job in Aruba almost 36 years ago created such a big passion for our island that is still visible today is something extraordinary. Additionally, the fact that Ed always shared his knowledge and gave colleagues the opportunity to learn and grow are part of what makes him an even more special person.

The entire team of A.T.A. thanks Ed for believing in Aruba as a product and for loving our island. We trust that in Ed's new chapter, Aruba can continue depending on his great support and dedication. □

on, he had a connection with our island and this connection remained forever. Ed stayed as GM at Americana until 1998, and after that he served in different roles in hotels in Aruba but also as part of different associations; among others, as president of AHATA and CHA in different roles.

Between 2011 and 2014, Ed was also a member of the supervisory board of A.T.A. In 2014, Ed left the island for a temporary job, in the name of A.T.A. to attend with different affairs in

A.T.A.'s offices in the United States. In 2015, Ed officially became Director for North America and was officially in this position until the 31st of December 2022.

Ed together with his North America team and the agencies in the market created and adjusted strategies to attract high-value visitors. He also created campaigns that not only reached the target audience and surpassed stated goals, but at the same time caught the attention of others in the industry and

manage to win different prizes for Aruba.



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Papillon: the butterfly effect of magnificent food



PALM BEACH — Do you remember the film "Papillon" starring Steve McQueen? Papillon restaurant is the island's example where 'life imitates art.' The décor, especially the restrooms, was inspired by the movie. For more than a decade this restaurant has built a reputation with the fusion of classic French cuisine, Dutch and Caribbean flavors. Welcome in the world of wonders where ambiance, taste and service come together and you feel you are being welcomed in the home of the owner and her team.

"We find it really important that our guests have fun; can relax while listening to live music while their taste buds are being tickled by France, The Netherlands and the Caribbean. We offer a unique fusion of dishes and a night not to forget," says owner Tina. She points out that all Covid-protocol is in place here, they are very keen on hygiene and offer outside dining on a cozy, elegant terrace with social distancing in place and right on the high-rise strip.

Fresh oysters, caviar and wild boar

You are on vacation, life is to enjoy! If you want something special, a different flow than the usual then Papillon is the place to go. Foodies are in heaven here with classic French dishes such as Foie Gras, Frog Legs, fresh Oysters coming in on a weekly basis from Holland, Escargots, Dover Sole à la Meunière flown in from Europe and filleted at the table, Duck Breast seared on the skin, roasted and braised Lamb in Balashi beer and slow braised Wild Boar Shank. Do not leave without



trying the exclusive recommendation: Caviar! All of this combined with an extensive wine list from around the world makes Papillon a must-do on your Aruban vacation.

Let the music play!

We will give you another reason to visit: on Monday's and Friday's the famous Marisela who enchants you with her acoustic performance accompanied by percussion only; on Thursday's and Saturday's you can enjoy the tunes of live sax player Jairo and on Sunday's and Tuesday's Jose Herrera will enchant you with his keyboard talent. The musicians interact with the guests, requests can be send in, the live tunes definitely add to the experience.

Vegetarian vibes present

Impressive vegetarian/vegan

dishes are set up especially for the guests by the chef and Meredith from Vegan Aruba. "We offer vegan choices that are really good and tasty. Our daily soup is always vegan too." What are you waiting for, make sure to pay a visit to this elegant yet laid-back restaurant while on Aruba. You are most welcome! Papillon Restaurant is located at The Village across the Hilton Aruba Caribbean Resort & Casino and within walking distance of all other major hotels.

Make your reservation today at:

info@papillonaruba.com
or call/WhatsApp + 00297 6995400
Open Daily: 5pm – 10.00pm – Early Bird from 5pm – 7pm
For all menus and specials visit the website: www.papillonaruba.com



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Minister Dangui Oduber Aruba's Minister of Tourism Mr. Dangui Oduber enjoyed a lovely conversation with a couple from U.S.A

Monday morning, January 17th, the Minister of Tourism, Mr. Dangui Oduber, had the pleasure of meeting two wonderful tourists visiting our island from San Francisco. The pair are staying at the Casa Del Mar Hotel and were enjoying a nice stroll on Aruba's spotlight beach, The Eagle Beach, when they met the Minister.

The Couple, Myrna (82) and Stuart(90) Aronoff, love Aruba and have been visiting Aruba for 32 consecutive years now. They have always enjoyed Aruba's weather, the beaches and most importantly, the people. Along with their beloved kids and grandkids, Aruba has always been a destination spot for their

family, where they all meet to gather and enjoy each other's company and the beauty of family. Stuart praised the island for its beauty, safety and overall, the experience.

"As the Minister of Tourism, it filled me with great joy and satisfaction to hear such good comments from our visitors. The government of



Aruba will keep working on the future. The safety of our visitors will always be and is of paramount importance for the government".□

Aruba to me

ORANJESTAD — You are back and we would like to portrait you! By inviting you to send us your favorite vacation picture while enjoying our Happy Island.

Complete the sentence: Aruba to me is Send your picture with that text (including your name and where you are from) to: news@arubatoday.com and we will publish your vacation memory. Isn't that a special way to keep your best moments alive? Please do note: By submitting photos, text or any other materials, you give permission to The Aruba Today Newspaper, Caribbean Speed Printers and any of its affiliated companies to use said materials, as well as names, likeness, etc. for promotional purposes without compensation. Last but not least: check

out our website, Instagram and Facebook page! Thank you for supporting our free newspaper, we strive to make you a happy reader every day again.

For today we received a lovely message from Ron and Nonnie Rubin from Boston, MA.

They wrote to us saying; Aruba to us means being in our home away from home with our Aruba family. We first came to Aruba 37 years ago and have been at the Costa Linda for the last 31 years.

In those years, Aruba has seen huge development, but the constants are the wonderful people and the beautiful beach. We now come with our children & their families including our 6 wonderful grandchildren ranging in age from 6 to 18. They all love it as much as we do. The only thing on



the schedule is the beach, pool, bingo, reading, & arts & crafts. At the end of the day, we all sit down together for dinner.

It just does not get any better for us."

Thank you for sending us this wonderful message sharing what Aruba means to you with us and our readers!□

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For Directions

Sea turtle conservation by Turtugaruba Foundation

ORANJESTAD — Turtugaruba was founded on September 3rd, 2003 by a group of enthusiastic volunteers. Ten years earlier, in 1993, a Sea Turtle Recovery Action Plan (STRAP) was introduced in Aruba and the rest of the Caribbean as an initiative of the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP). Tom Barmes, who was working at DLVV (Department of Agriculture, Husbandry and Fishery) was one of the writers of the STRAP for Aruba, together with Karen Eckert, director of WIDECAST (Wider Caribbean Sea Turtle Conservation Network). This is how sea turtle conservation started on the island following a plan that is still complied with today.

Tom formed a group of volunteers around him, because nature does not know office hours, like an organization such as DLVV. This group of volunteers used the name Widecast Aruba and today there are still a few of them active. They first started protecting the Leatherback Sea Turtle nests on Palm Beach and Eagle Beach. This group also investigated which other species of sea turtles use Aruba as their nesting habitat and which beaches are used by them. For a period of 25 years a study has been conducted in which every early morning the beach was being monitored in which now there is a good overview of sea turtle nesting activities.

There are 4 different sea turtle species that visit Aruba to lay their eggs, each with their own specific season:

- Leatherback Sea Turtle - Leder-schildpad - Driekiel (March – September)
- Loggerhead Sea Turtle - Dikkop-schildpad - Cawama (May – Sep-



tember)

- Hawksbill Sea Turtle - Karetsschildpad - Caret (June – December)
- Green Turtle - Soepschildpad - Turtuga Blanco (July-November)

There also came a better understanding and overview of the biggest threats to the sea turtles existence in Aruba and how these problems should be tackled. Despite hard work, all those years, most problems have not really gone away, but luckily and thanks to the enormous efforts from the volunteers, the sea turtles are still here. On Aruba the sea turtles are threatened with extinction by pollution, driving on dunes and beaches with quads and 4x4's and the loss of nesting beaches due to coastal development on behalf of

tourism. Because coastal development comes with artificial light and artificial light is a major issue for sea turtles, mother turtle usually comes on shore at night looking for a dark beach to make her nest. However... a dark beach is hard to find here nowadays. Light causes stress and can result in her returning to the sea without laying her eggs. Artificial light causes disorientation for the baby sea turtles (hatchlings).

They crawl towards artificial light sources (like streetlights, hotel lights, etc.) and then they don't find the sea. In the 90's it was still a common occurrence to find a complete nest of about 70 hatchlings on the streets, dead, as cars drove over them. Thanks to their protection methods and a lot of time and effort, the volunteers of Turtugaruba have managed to get this under control. But for a sustainable solution there must be less light visible on the beaches and a strict regulation of it. Sea turtles simply need dark nesting beaches for their survival. It is clear that even more coastal development would not make the situation better for the sea turtles. Again, more hotel rooms? And even busier beaches? These are choices Aruba has to make. Do we want to leave a place for the sea turtles? Not only Aruba, but the entire world needs sea turtles! Sea turtles play a vital role in keeping our oceans healthy.

The Green Turtle, for example,

keeps the sea grasses on the bottom of the sea short and therefore a healthy place for many fish to deposit their eggs.

The Leatherback, the largest turtle of the world, eats mainly jellyfish and helps maintain the balance between jellyfish and plankton. Despite the threats that exist on Aruba, the turtles still keep coming. That's why today Turtugaruba is especially proud of the volunteers and the many people and organizations of our community that carry a warm place in their hearts for the sea turtles. All four species are active now, which means all hands on deck in the field for us, the volunteers. We strive to keep the sea turtles, our oldest 'repeat guests', always coming back to Aruba and get the chance to reproduce here.

What you can do to protect the sea turtles

- Lights out for sea turtles.
- Do not drive on beaches.
- Do not litter. Do not leave any plastic cups, straws or bags on the beach.
- Remove obstacles from the beach.
- Do not disturb a nesting sea turtle. Do not attempt to touch the turtle but stay at a respectful distance (at least 10 meters).
- Do call Turtugaruba (24 hour Turtle Hotline: (297) 5929393). For more information visit the facebook page Turtugaruba Foundation. □



Linda Wolff, a trajectory dedicated to folkloric music

ORANJESTAD – Linda was born on the 9th of May 1955 in Aruba. At a very young age, she discovered her love and talent for singing. It didn't take long before she affiliated to the Santa Anna Choir and began dedicating to singing at the Santa Anna church in Noord.

IN 1979, Mr. Jossy Brokke Jr. organized a Mexican festival at the Club IOWUA, and here Linda participated singing the song 'Los Laureles' and was among the 10 finalists. She went on to represent Aruba in the grand Mexican Festival of the Antilles, which took place at the Holiday Inn hotel in Curaçao. Linda gave a beautiful performance that night. Back then, Linda was part of the Mariachi Montañeros of Noord.

Since that time, Linda continued dedicating to singing and continued demonstrating her talent and gaining experience as a singer of Ranchera music.

Linda Wolff was the main singer of Mariachi Guadarincana for a long time, where Linda would sing at family parties, birthdays, weddings and other special activities. She continued participating in most Mexican festivals, showcasing her love for this music genre, with her sensual voice and an attractive and charismatic personality which proved popular among those loving the mariachi music.

In a past interview, Linda said that back when she and her cousins were young teenagers, they started their own home 'aguinaldo' – traditional Christmas music – and together at the yearend they would sing all the Venezuelan carols: tucusito, o luna, fuego al canon etc. showing the joy and union that they had to enjoy and sing as a family.

Linda did not stop at mariachi music, but also dedicated herself to music and singing participating in different festivals, including



Gospel, Dande, Tumba and a festival dedicated to our Flag and Anthem, 18th of March and folkloric music.

In many occasions, Linda was a finalist in these festivals by showing her beautiful voice in each song.

In 1994 she participated in the grand Festival Tipico y Dande and she was the first finalist in the female category.

In 2010, Linda participated in the Gospel Festival – Soldiers of Christ and finished in 5th place. The following year in the same festival she won second place.

In 2018, Linda received a well-deserved award at the Cas di Cultura, awarded by Fundacion Artistar during a Mexican music festival for children and youth. Linda took guitar lessons and she was accompanying herself for her favorite songs.

After a while, Linda integrated into the group Lirios del Campo by invitation and was directed by Mr. Vicente Tromp, with Linda as singer and guitarist.

Linda also sang in the popular group The New Dimension, before she went on to join the popular group Placentero Ritmo y Cuerde.

Linda was part of Placentero Ritmo y Cuerde for many years.

Back in 1993, when Seaport Market Place would organize weekly activities



including a Tropical Night, Placentero would animate this night with rhythm and flavor for tourists and locals to enjoy, and Linda was already part of the group singing and moving to the rhythm to the songs of their own production.

During her trajectory with this group, Linda sang many times at family parties and any celebration throughout the year. She participated in different festivals and had the opportunity of recording different songs for the yearend, many of them composed by Mr. Robert Maduro.

Linda Wolff was a great person and singer with an unmatched charisma, humble and charming character, always cheerful. Yesterday 18th of January our people said our final goodbyes to Linda in sadness but consoled by her beautiful and unforgettable memories. □

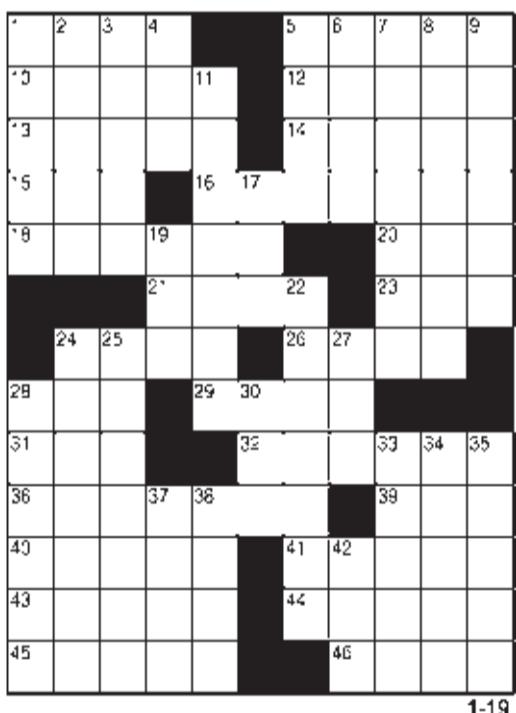


CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

- 1 Writer Uris 44 Day in Hollywood
- 5 Musical symbol 45 Calls for
- 10 Secret lingo 46 Walk in water
- 12 Pink shade 1 Accept eagerly
- 13 Rice field 2 Make
- 14 Battery end 3 Poet
- 15 Try out 4 Nash Auction
- 16 Bird with flippers 5 Checkout act
- 18 Solving tool 6 — Kong
- 20 Plopped down 7 Wakening
- 21 Aide: Abbr. 8 Glowing
- 23 Some 9 More than
- 24 Posted 11 Keyboard
- 26 Lose freshness 12 Cratchit's son
- 28 Bob 13 Rice field
- 29 Before long 14 Battery end
- 31 Imitating 15 Try out
- 32 Group of five 16 Bird with flippers
- 36 Fine 17 Solving tool
- 39 Holiday lead-in 18 Plopped down
- 40 Professor at Hogwarts 19 Aide: Abbr.
- 41 John of music 20 Aide: Abbr.
- 43 Quartet doubled 21 Aide: Abbr.



AXYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

1-19

CRYPTOQUOTE

LM U C Q ' B Z C A M B S M L V X Y E
D T J Y C T K Q W D T B S M X I Y M Z .
D M U C I Z M B S M X I Y M Z S C A M
B V D M U S C Q W M E . — W X M B C

B S I Q D M X W

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: IT IS HEALTH THAT IS REAL WEALTH AND NOT PIECES OF GOLD AND SILVER. — MAHATMA GANDHI



Guests are shown in one of the many pools at the Grand Wailea Resort, Feb. 6, 2006 in Wailea, Maui, Hawaii.

Associated Press

Are resort fees ever worth it?

By SALLY FRENCH of Nerd-Wallet

The Andaz Maui at Wailea Resort, a Hyatt resort on 15 beachfront acres in Hawaii, is far from a place to sleep. There are multiple pools, including a lagoon and three infinity pools. As part of the resort fee, you can also take a stand-up paddleboarding course, use the resort's snorkel equipment and GoPro action camera and maybe even learn ukulele, hula or mixology.

It's all marketed as complimentary but it's only sort of so. Andaz Maui is one of what the American Hotel and Lodging Association estimates is 6% of all hotels that charge a resort fee. These fees run between \$20 and \$50 per night and they've become one of the most controversial issues in the travel industry.

NerdWallet analyzed more than 100 U.S. hotels with January 2023 check-in dates as part of its 2023 Best-Of Awards to see which hotels have the best and worst fees. Among the hotels that charge them, the average resort fee was

\$42.41, representing nearly 11% of the overall nightly cost. The Andaz Maui's daily resort fee is \$50 plus tax, which is above average. But because Andaz Maui's nightly rates are also above average, the fee is about 6% of the overall nightly cost to stay in January 2023, based on data gathered in December 2022. And like most other resorts that charge such fees, the Andaz's fee is not optional even if you never use the amenities.

THE CASE FOR RESORT FEES

Resort fees may be a way for hotels to increase profits without necessarily charging guests more.

"Hotels claim that resort fees allow hotels to reduce the commissions paid to online travel agents," according to the Federal Trade Commission's 2017 report. □

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Hacking, not shoe-leather, solves thriller 'Missing'

By MARK KENNEDY
AP Entertainment Writer

June Allen's mother has vanished during a romantic vacation with her boyfriend to Colombia when "Missing" starts gaining steam. The FBI are supposedly on it, with one special agent telling June: "The best thing you can do is wait by the phone." Wait by the phone? You don't know June Allen, buddy.

Audiences get a ringside seat to 18-year-old June's quick mind and even quicker fingers as the teenager uses all the modern tools at her disposal to solve the mystery in this superbly constructed and satisfying thriller from the director-writer team of Will Merrick and Nick Johnson.

It's true that June ("A Wrinkle in Time" star Storm Reid) is mostly by the phone in her Los Angeles home but she's not waiting: When mom doesn't return as expected, June checks her reservations, uses Google street view to inspect the Colombian hotel and notices it has security cameras installed. She then calls the front desk, and, using



This image released by Sony Pictures shows Storm Reid, left, and Megan Sure in a scene from "Missing."

Associated Press

a Spanish translating software, finds out that the security tape gets overwritten every 48 hours.

So June contacts the FBI making sure to find and inspect the agent's online credentials but also locating and hiring a local Colombian thank you Venmo to grab the video and be her eyes and ears on the ground via that nation's

equivalent of TaskRabbit. She then sifts through credit card receipts, iPhone location services, live tourist cameras and tons of online sleuthing to get closer to the truth, much better than a flood of salacious online news that sometimes invades June's screen.

"Missing," building off the related film "Searching" from 2018, manages to

make a film about small screens feel electric on a big one. June stands shoulder to shoulder with all other civilians thrust into being world-class detectives, like Veronica Mars or Jessica Fletcher. It's just the tools that have changed, and a noticeable lack of shoe leather that's needed. June shows a real aptitude for guessing passwords and

her cut-and-paste game is ferocious.

At one point we see June's laptop screen a mess of open Sticky Notes, Zillow listings, phone reverse look-ups, blocked Twitter tabs, MapQuest directions and new bookmarked contacts and realize that what we're looking at is the 2023 equivalent of the so-called "murder board," that trusted collage of random suspect photos tacked onto a cork board and connected by twine. "Missing" doesn't need twine it's a pure Gen-Z know-how flex.

Merrick and Johnson have so many twists and turns and reverses up their sleeve that you may feel you, too, may have something to do with the disappearance of June's mother (Nia Long, always a pleasure.) People have a tendency to arrive in June's frame of vision, then become suspects before eventually getting off the hook.

But not all. Your attention will not lag, despite the fact that 80% of the film is watching small screens pop open and closed on June's laptop. □

Snoop Dogg, Gloria Estefan, Sade make it to Songwriters Hall

By MARK KENNEDY
AP Entertainment Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Snoop Dogg, Gloria Estefan, Sade, Jeff Lynne, Glen Ballard, Teddy Riley and Liz Rose have been chosen to join the Songwriters Hall of Fame, a class that includes the writers of such varied hits as "Man In the Mirror," "Drop It Like It's Hot" and "Rhythm Is Gonna Get You." The seven songwriters from the class of 2023 will be inducted at a gala June 15 at the Marriott Marquis Hotel in New York City. Snoop Dogg, whose hits include "Drop It Like It's Hot" and "Gin & Juice," will be joining such rappers as Missy Elliott and Jay-Z in the hall. Estefan is credited for popularizing Latin rhythms with such crossover smashers as "Rhythm Is Gonna Get

You" and "Let's Get Loud." The inductees include soul-jazz vocalist Sade, whose 1980s soft rock hits include "Smooth Operator" and "The Sweetest Taboo," and Lynne, of ELO, who penned "Mr. Blue Sky" and "Evil Woman."

"I'm very excited about this honor. Songwriting has always been my passion. This

means so much to me," Lynne tweeted Wednesday.

Ballard helped write Alanis Morissette's monster 1995 album "Jagged Little Pill" and was involved in the recording and writing of several Michael Jackson albums, including "Thriller," "Bad" and "Dangerous."

Riley, the singer, songwriter

and producer, is credited with creating New Jack Swing and its top anthems like Bobby Brown's "My Prerogative" and Keith Sweat's "I Want Her." Rose co-wrote many songs with Taylor Swift, including "You Belong with Me," "Tear-drops on My Guitar" and "White Horse."

The 2023 class "represents not just iconic songs but also diversity and unity across genres, ethnicity and gender, songwriters who have enriched our lives and, in their time, literally transformed music and the lives of billions of listeners all over the world," said Nile Rogers, the hall's chair. Eligible voting members late last year turned in ballots with their choices of three nominees from the songwriter category and

three from the performing-songwriter category.

Some of the 2023 nominees who will have to wait include The Doobie Brothers, R.E.M., Heart, Blondie, Bryan Adams, Patti Smith and Steve Winwood.

The Songwriters Hall of Fame was established in 1969 to honor those creating the popular music. A songwriter with a notable catalog of songs qualifies for induction 20 years after the first commercial release of a song.

Some already in the hall include Carole King, Paul Simon, Billy Joel, Jon Bon Jovi and Richie Sambora, Elton John and Bernie Taupin, Brian Wilson, James Taylor, Bruce Springsteen, Tom Petty, Lionel Richie, Bill Withers, Neil Diamond, and Phil Collins. □



This combination of photos shows musicians Snoop Dogg, from left, Gloria Estefan, and Sade, who have been chosen to join the Songwriters Hall of Fame.

Associated Press

Hampered by bad hip, Rafael Nadal loses at Australian Open

By HOWARD FENDRICH

AP Tennis Writer

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP)

— Rafael Nadal bowed his head during changeovers and rested his elbows on his knees, the very picture of resignation.

What already was a poor start to 2023, following a year marred by all manner of health issues, reached a low point at the Australian Open on Wednesday.

The defending champion and No. 1 seed at Melbourne Park, Nadal injured his left hip and lost to Mackenzie McDonald 6-4, 6-4, 7-5 in the second round, abruptly ending his bid for a record-extending 23rd Grand Slam trophy.

"It's a tough moment. It's a tough day," said Nadal, a 36-year-old Spaniard. "I can't say that I am not destroyed mentally at this moment, because I would be lying."

He pulled up awkwardly at the end of a point late in the second set against the 65th-ranked McDonald.

Nadal was visited by a trainer on the sideline, then left the court for a medical timeout. Up in the stands, his wife wiped away tears. Nadal returned to play, but was clearly compromised and not his usual indefatigable self, saying afterward that he could not hit his backhand properly and could not run much, either. But Nadal added that, as the reigning champion of the tournament, he did not want to leave the court via a mid-match retirement.

He said the hip had been bothering him for a couple of days, but it was never as bad as it became on Wednesday. Nadal was not sure exactly what the nature of the injury was, saying that he will have medical tests to determine if it has to do with a muscle, joint or cartilage.

"'It's never over until it's over' type thing. He didn't even want to roll over and quit. He kept fighting until basically the end, even though he maybe didn't have all his game," said McDonald, a 27-year-old



Rafael Nadal of Spain reacts during his second round loss to Mackenzie McDonald of the U.S. at the Australian Open tennis championship in Melbourne, Australia, Wednesday, Jan. 18, 2023.

Associated Press

who won NCAA championships in singles and doubles for UCLA in 2016.

"I was in the locker room," McDonald said about the aftermath of the match, "and I was like, 'Hey, that's actually really big for me, because I haven't beaten someone of that caliber.'" This is Nadal's earliest exit at any Grand Slam tournament since bowing out in the first round in Melbourne in 2016 against No. 45 Fernando Verdasco. That also made Verdasco the lowest-ranked player to defeat Nadal in Australia until, of course, McDonald on Wednesday.

McDonald has never been past the fourth round at a major tournament. In his lone previous matchup against Nadal, at the 2020 French Open, McDonald won a total of just four games in a lopsided loss.

"He kicked my butt," McDonald recalled Wednesday.

This result overshadowed everything else going on in Melbourne, of course, on a day that persistent rain pushed back the start of play on all but the three courts with retractable roofs until after 5 p.m. local time.

That meant some players most notably, No. 1

Iga Swiatek, No. 3 Jessica Pegula and No. 6 Maria Sakkari won matches that put them in the third round before more than a dozen others even had contested a single point in the first round.

At night, 2022 French Open runner-up Coco Gauff got past 2021 U.S. Open champion Emma Raducanu 6-3, 7-6 (4) in a second-round meeting between two of the sports young stars.

"I know a lot of people were looking forward to that matchup," said Gauff, an 18-year-old American. "I'm glad we got the prime spot."

I hope we delivered." Seeded men who won included No. 3 Stefanos Tsitsipas, No. 6 Felix Auger-Aliassime, No. 7 Daniil Medvedev the runner-up to Nadal last year and to Novak Djokovic in 2021 — No. 15 Jannik Sinner and No. 16 Frances Tiafoe.

"I told him, 'You're going to be in a position to win today. You can win today," Tiafoe said about fellow American McDonald. "Sort of seeing how he feels, I'm happy for Mackie."

'GOAT wins' don't come easy. Something to tell his grandkids one day, and you have to be happy for that guy."

A year ago, Nadal won the Australian Open for the second time to earn his 21st major championship, then raised his total to 22 the most for a man at Roland Garros.

He is currently ranked No. 2 but was the top seed at Melbourne Park because No. 1 Carlos Alcaraz is sitting out the Australian Open with a bad leg.

Nadal's body has betrayed him quite a bit recently. He needed pain-killing injections for his left foot on the way to winning the French Open last June, pulled out of Wimbledon last July before the semifinals because of a torn abdominal muscle and also dealt with a problem with rib cartilage in 2022.

Nadal's exit drains the tournament of yet more star power. In addition to his absence and Alcaraz's, 2022 Wimbledon runner-up Nick Kyrgios pulled out because his left knee needs arthroscopic surgery, four-time Grand Slam champion Naomi Osaka is off the tour while she is pregnant, two-time major champ Simona Halep is serving a provisional doping ban and Venus Williams is hurt.

That is all on top of this: The 2023 edition of the Australian Open is the first Grand Slam tournament since Serena Williams and Roger Federer announced their retirements.

Nadal arrived in Melbourne with an 0-2 record this season, making him 1-6 dating to September, when he lost to Tiafoe in the fourth round of the U.S. Open.

Even during a first-round victory Monday, a four-setter against a cramping Jack Draper, Nadal never quite seemed to be at his chase-every-ball, put-every-high-spin-shot-on-target best. He looked, somehow, his age.

The same was the case from the outset against McDonald.

"I'm really happy with how I started that match. I thought I was playing really well, serving great, returning well, too," McDonald said. "So I was really taking it to him."

That is true. From the get-go, McDonald was on, Nadal was off.

The very first game served as something of a harbinger: McDonald broke for a 1-0 lead thanks a trio of unforced errors by Nadal two off his feared lefty forehand side.

Out of sorts, Nadal got into a back-and-forth with chair umpire Marijana Veljovic during breaks in action about whether she was starting the between-points serve clock too quickly for his liking.

Soon, McDonald was up a set. Then he went up a break right away in the second.

After one point in that set, Nadal showed real signs of trouble. He squatted behind the baseline and placed his racket down on the court.

Then he went over and leaned on a sign, prompting Veljovic to ask whether Nadal was OK.

Nadal watched a couple of serves off McDonald's racket fly past him, then was checked on by the trainer.

While the match would proceed, it essentially was over right then and there. □

76ers, Devils owners buy into Ripken, Cooperstown baseball

By DAN GELSTON

AP Sports Writer

Cal Ripken and Cooperstown are connected again.

Ripken's eponymous tournaments for youth baseball players have merged with Cooperstown All Star Village under a new agreement with the owners of the Philadelphia 76ers and New Jersey Devils.

Josh Harris and David Blitzer have become majority investors in the deal announced Wednesday that merged two of the leading youth baseball brands that combined to host more 15,000 teams and 250,000 participants last year. The Ripken Experience operates in Maryland, South



Former Baltimore Orioles' Cal Ripken Jr., throws the ball around before the start of an exhibition spring training baseball game between the Atlanta Braves and the Washington Nationals, Friday, March 6, 2015, in Kissimmee, Fla.

Associated Press

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Carolina and Tennessee and plans to open a location in 2023 in Kentucky. The All-Star Village, based in Oneonta, New York, hosts more than 10,000 players ages 10 to 12 each summer.

"We can maybe explore newer complexes in other parts of the country at a much faster rate than it was going," Ripken said in a phone interview. "Our growth has really come along the last few years. When we started talking, it just became obvious, why kind of compete in the same space? Why don't we merge because we're very much alike." Harris and Blitzer spent an unspecified sum out of their family offices, rather than Harris Blitzer Sports & Entertainment, which has ownership stakes in professional sports teams and other entities.

The 1982 AL Rookie of the Year and 1983 AL MVP, Ripken spent his entire career with the Baltimore Orioles before retiring in 2001. He set a record by playing in 2,632 consecutive games and was inducted into the Hall of Fame in 2007. The Ripken Experience and All-Star Village also pledged to grow inclusion efforts in baseball. Blitzer already was a minority owner with the Cleveland Guardians and he said the franchise would sponsor one underserved, Cleveland-area team to attend the All Star Village this season. For the first time since 1950, shortly after Jackie Robinson broke the Major League Baseball color barrier, no U.S.-born Black players played in the 2022 World Series between Houston and Philadelphia. Black players made up 7.2% of opening day rosters in 2022. That dipped from 7.6% the previous year and marked the lowest since study data was first collected in 1991, when 18% of MLB players were Black. "We don't go looking to go partner with Major League Baseball to find more athletes to play baseball," Ripken said. □